

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for allowing claims 22-30 and for finding claims 6-11 and 17-21 to be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the above referenced patent application in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, and respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections. Claims 1, 7, 12 and 18 have been amended. Claims 5, 6, 16 and 17 have been canceled without prejudice. No claims have been added. Thus, claims 1-4, 7-15 and 18-30 are pending.

35 U.S.C. §102 Rejections

35 U.S.C. §102(e) Rejection over *Hooper*

The Office Action rejects claims 1-5 and 12-16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by *Hooper*, USPN 7,181,742 (hereinafter “*Hooper*”). Claims 5 and 16 are canceled herein, rendering moot the above rejection as applied thereto. For at least the following reasons, Applicants traverse the above rejection as applied to pending claims 1-4 and 12-15.

The *Allowable Subject Matter* section of the Office Action states that claims 6-11 and 17-21 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The above rejected claims include independent claims 1 and 12, which are amended herein to recite, respectively, combinations of limitations previously recited in claims 6 and 17, which are canceled herein. Accordingly, currently amended claims 1 and 12 each recite a combination of limitations which the Office Action states is allowable.

For at least the foregoing reasons, *Hooper* fails to anticipate each of current independent claims 1 and 12 and any claims depending therefrom. Therefore, Applicants request that the above 35 U.S.C. §102(e) rejection of pending claims 1-4 and 12-15 based on *Hooper* be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

The *Allowable Subject Matter* section of the Office Action states that claims 22-30 are allowed. Claims 22-30 are not amended herein. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the previous allowance of claims 22-30 should be maintained.

CONCLUSION

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the objections and rejections have been overcome. Therefore, claims 1-4, 7-15 and 18-30 are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone if such contact would further the examination of the present application. Please charge any shortages and credit any overcharges to our Deposit Account number 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,
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